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Constitution of Assoc. of Friends
for Diffusion of Religious Knowledge.

1859

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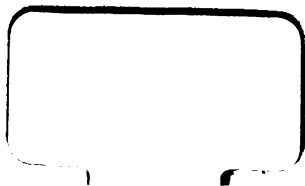


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Edward H. Bond
THE CONSTITUTION
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FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS

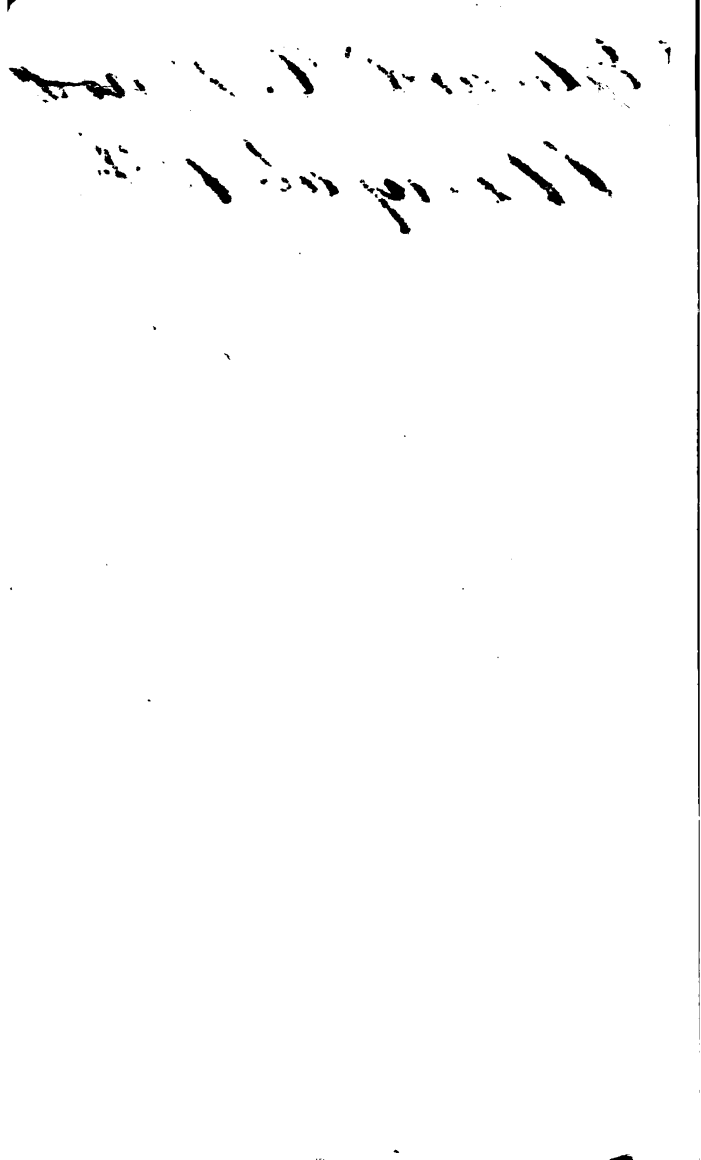
FOR THE
Diffusion of Religious and Useful Knowledge.

WITH
BRIEF EXTRACTS FROM ITS MINUTES.

Philadelphia, First Month 7, 1859.

PHILADELPHIA:
C. SHERMAN & SON, PRINTERS,
CORNER SEVENTH AND CHERRY STREETS.

1859.



THE CONSTITUTION
AND
FIRST ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS
FOR THE

Diffusion of Religious and Useful Knowledge.

WITH
BRIEF EXTRACTS FROM ITS MINUTES.

Philadelphia, First Month 7, 1859.

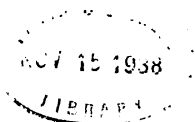
OFFICE, NO. 109 NORTH TENTH STREET.

PHILADELPHIA:
C. SHERMAN & SON, PRINTERS,
CORNER SEVENTH AND CHERRY STREETS.

1859.

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Peabody Fund

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I.

THE title of this Association shall be, "The Association of Friends for the Diffusion of Religious and Useful Knowledge."

ARTICLE II.

The Association shall always consist of members of the Religious Society of Friends; and any person being a member of that Society, who shall be proposed and approved of at any meeting of the Association, may be a member by the payment of two dollars annually; or a life-member by the payment, at one time, of twenty dollars.

ARTICLE III.

The objects of the Association shall be, to

print and circulate such books, not inconsistent with the principles of Friends, as may appear suited to promote the diffusion of religious and useful knowledge; and to aid in the selection or purchase of books suitable for libraries established by Friends.

ARTICLE IV.

The officers of the Association shall be a Secretary, Treasurer, and Executive Committee, of which the Secretary and Treasurer shall be ex-officio members.

ARTICLE V.

The times of meeting, and quorum to transact business, and generally all other details necessary for the management of its affairs, to be prescribed by the By-Laws of the Association.

ARTICLE VI.

No Article of this Constitution shall be changed unless the alteration or addition is proposed at one meeting of the Association, and adopted at a succeeding meeting.

OFFICERS FOR 1859.

TREASURER.

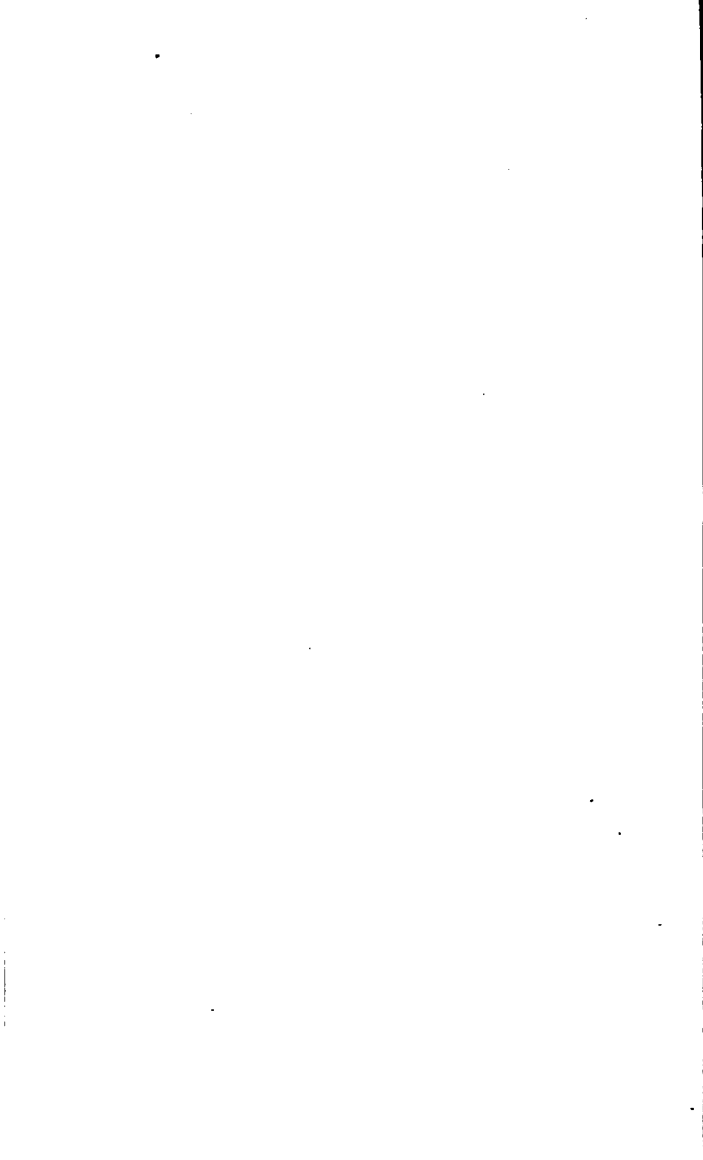
WISTAR MORRIS.

SECRETARY.

JAMES WHITALL.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

MARMADUKE C. COPE,	EDWARD YARNALL,
CHARLES YARNALL,	JNO. M. WHITALL,
THEOPHILUS E. BEESLEY,	RICHARD RICHARDSON,
THOMAS KIMBER, JR.,	WM. F. MITCHELL,
JOSEPH POTTS,	ANTHONY M. KIMBER,
ISRAEL H. JOHNSON,	CHAS. HARTSHORNE.



EXTRACTS FROM THE MINUTES.

IN the following papers will be found a statement of the organization and purposes of the Association.

At a meeting of Friends held in Philadelphia, on the 5th day of 1st mo., 1858, the following circular was read:—

“The attention of a number of Friends having been drawn to the need of providing additional means for the illustration of the Christian principles which we profess, as well as the promotion of useful knowledge generally, it has been concluded to form an Association under the title of ‘The Association of Friends for the Diffusion of Religious and Useful Knowledge.’ The means which are proposed for this end, are the publication of small works, chiefly memoirs of devoted

Christians, and the establishment of an agency in this city, through which to aid Friends in distant places in the selection and purchase of useful books on various topics for family, neighborhood, and Preparative Meeting Libraries.

“ The publications of ‘ The Tract Association,’ and the reprint of many of our standard works in the ‘ Friends’ Library,’ afford very useful means of religious instruction, and open to the careful inquirer sources of accurate information in reference to the history and doctrines of our religious Society. There seems, however, to be a want of books holding a middle place between the Tract and the more extended Biography or Doctrinal Essay ; of books, which, bringing before the younger reader the more striking incidents of the lives of our pious fellow professors in connection with their Christian principles, shall at once inform and attract the inexperienced, while they stimulate to a wider range of inquiry in the perusal of more voluminous publications. Believing that the great truths of Christianity as they have ever been held by Friends, are of universal application, we deem it important to show, that in our own times, as well as in the

earlier days of the Society, they have produced their matured fruits. The lives of devoted men and women of modern times, who have given themselves to the promotion of the well-being of their fellow men, will therefore form a prominent feature of the proposed series : and it is not doubted that, exhibiting the results of an adherence to the same truths, they will attest the efficacy of Divine Grace in every age, and under various conditions of life.

“ Friends, in many parts of our widely extended country, appear to be increasingly sensible of the duty of intellectual as well as moral culture ; and also of the danger to their families from the wide diffusion of hurtful publications. It is felt that not only by advice and restraint, essential as these are, but also by providing useful and attractive reading, this danger is to be averted. Hence, praiseworthy efforts are making, often with very limited pecuniary means, to procure the establishment of carefully selected libraries calculated for the various classes of readers ; attracting the young by familiar and truthful narratives or easy and intelligible illustrations, while they stimulate the more advanced reader to

pursue his inquiries in different fields of knowledge, and directly or indirectly promote the highest interests of all. In the selection of books, Friends residing remote from the great centres of intercourse, are often much at a loss in reference to the character of the books offered for sale, and the most advantageous mode of purchasing them. It is believed, that if some of our younger Friends, who have had greater advantages in these respects, would devote some portion of their time to this object, they might do much in aiding those less favorably situated. If by means of an Association, acting through its committees, the merits of books could be ascertained, and by proper arrangements, purchases be judiciously made, much waste of means as well as injury to young readers might be prevented; while the knowledge that such an agency existed, would induce our distant Friends to greater efforts to avail themselves of its advantages.

“To carry out these views, as the means may be secured, will be the aim of the proposed Association.

“Much interest in the objects of the meeting having been expressed ‘The Association of

Friends for the Diffusion of Religious and Useful Knowledge' was duly organized, and a Constitution was adopted."

The following extracts are taken from reports made at various meetings of the Association :—

"Second mo. 26th, 1858. The further the Committee has advanced in the examination of the field upon which we have entered, the more interesting does it appear. Including both the ancient and modern literature of our own Religious Society, and not confined within those limits when subjects are treated by others consistently with our Christian principles, it needs but the earnest and diligent application of our means to diffuse throughout the breadth of our organization, and far beyond it, a series of volumes which must exert a permanently beneficial influence on the community. The mere enumeration of the books which have already been offered to the Committee, the offer in each case including the donation of a complete set of the stereotype plates of the proposed volume, is sufficient to show how large is the variety of subjects which must ultimately be included in the series."

“Fourth mo. 21st, 1858. Although the labors of the Association are but begun, the interest of the movement continues increasingly to develope itself. In a community where almost every child learns to read, and where, from our institutions, the temptations consequent upon this instruction are very great, it is of the utmost moment that truth should be presented freely and in an attractive form. Variety in the subjects treated, neatness in the mechanical execution of the volumes in which they are discussed, simplicity in expression, abundance of truthful narrative, and fulness of illustration, are needed in order to reach the great body of readers, and preoccupy that ground in which unscrupulous men are ever ready, for the sake of gain, to scatter broadcast the seeds of vice.

“We believe that the principles of Christianity, as held by Friends, are peculiarly adapted to the wants of such a community: they commend themselves by their plainness and simplicity; they address us as individuals; they do not necessarily require any formal organization; they call men from a dependence on their fellow men, and, above all, they satisfy that sense of want which nothing but Divine truth can appease.

“There are many practical testimonies of our religious Society which should be more freely brought into notice through the publications of the Association. The disuse of water baptism and other typical rites, silent worship, the unlawfulness of war, of oaths, and of dissipating amusements, &c., are topics which might be treated in these small volumes with great advantage to the community. Happily, nearly all these subjects have already been discussed by approved writers, and little more is needed than carefully to select the papers and publish them apart, with reference to the special object in view. Often the views of more than one Friend on the same topic might be usefully printed in a single volume, as on almost every question the same subject presents itself in different aspects to different minds.

“Selections from the printed Epistles of London and other Yearly Meetings might be made with obvious benefit, much of the valuable matter in these papers being now inaccessible to most readers.

“The proper continuation of the juvenile series is an object of much interest. It is difficult to over-estimate the importance of

storing the memory of young children with hymns, simple verses, and true narratives, tending to foster a love of nature, of their kind, and of the brute creation, and to develop that tenderness of feeling which is so natural to early life, but so likely to be lost by contact with the world. To lead their thoughts gently from outward things to their Father in Heaven ; to associate in their minds peace and goodness, true enjoyment with self-restraint, and the doing of good to others with their pleasantest recollections of home and childhood, is a training which may reasonably be expected to yield the most enduring fruits. To aid those who are seeking thus to train their children, is an object which we may well keep in view as one of our most important aims."

"Fifth mo. 28th, 1858. Perhaps no reading is more likely to attract, interest, and fix truths on the minds of children (and indeed of older persons also), than sprightly articles on subjects of Natural History. Thus, a description of a walk, or a longer excursion among natural scenes, may fitly introduce and illustrate many truths that will insensibly become

fixed on the mind of the reader, and greatly influence his after life.

“Other subjects have come before our view in considering this matter, which might furnish suitable topics for volumes of our series, and some of which we may be allowed to suggest. A collection of anecdotes illustrating the value and power of silent worship, taken from published records and authentic tradition—narratives of conversions to Christianity without outward instrumentalities—examples of the practical working of peace principles—narratives of remarkable providences—illustrations of the blessings attendant on simple faithfulness to the monitions of the Holy Spirit, whether in the greater or smaller affairs of life—and other kindred subjects, might furnish abundant material for useful and interesting works; and the publication of these, if prepared by those whose hearts are warmed by the same Spirit, cannot fail to be a seed-sowing ‘beside all waters,’ which will find soil prepared for it somewhere.”

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT.

IN reviewing the proceedings of the Association for the purpose of preparing the Annual Report, we are renewedly impressed with the belief that the feeling which led to its establishment was one in the right direction, and that the results thus far have justified the propriety of the measures adopted to effect the intended objects.

To provide religious and useful reading for the many who are not favored with ready access to the abundant sources of information which others enjoy, and to furnish, in a cheap and condensed form, the excellent truths and consistent examples found in larger and more expensive volumes, were our main motives for the undertaking. The plan on which our operations were based, was to invite such as

were interested to present to the Association the stereotype plates for each publication, which, after a careful examination, should be approved and adopted by it as one of its series.

In accordance with this, through the liberality of a number of Friends, the Association has now in its possession the following valuable plates, which have been presented, the cost of which was about \$925, viz. :—

A Memoir of Elizabeth Fry.

Views of American Slavery a Century Ago.

Youthful Pilgrims.

A Memoir of William Penn.

A Selection from the Epistles of Geo. Fox.

A Selection from the Letters of Isaac Pennington.

A Brief Memoir of Maria Fox.

A Memoir of D. Wheeler, with his Visit to the Pacific Isles.

Aunt Jane's Verses for Children.

Life of Margaret Fox.

Rambles of a Naturalist, with Life of the Author, Dr. Godman.

These, with several others now in course of preparation, will constitute, in a neat and portable form, a selection of religious and useful reading, which may be safely commend-

ed to parents and others, who have the guardianship of youth, and to all who are for themselves seeking instruction in the paths of virtue and true knowledge.

As it was soon evident that, in addition to the stock of stereotype plates, it would be necessary to raise a sufficient sum of money to enable the Association to print and publish editions of the several volumes, a committee was appointed for the purpose. A fund of \$1200 was freely contributed and paid into the treasury as a working capital. The first editions issued were 1000 copies of each of the works prepared for the press. These, with the exception of some copies not bound in a desirable form, were soon disposed of; and a second edition of 1000 of nearly all has been printed.

The circulation thus far has been mainly within the limits of our Religious Society in New England, New York, Ohio, Indiana, and Western Yearly Meetings.

In New England Yearly Meeting the Trustees of the Brown Fund, and in New York those of the Murray Fund, have respectively purchased a considerable number of our books. A small parcel was sent to Mount Pleasant,

Ohio, at the time of the last Yearly Meeting, to the care of a Friend, through whose kind co-operation they were all disposed of during the week of the Meeting, and who informed us that he thought two or three times the number might have been sold.

In Cincinnati and in Baltimore, Friends have formed associations, having for their object the dissemination of books issued by the Society of Friends, including our publications, and have efficiently co-operated with us.

We have no doubt that a large field of labor would open to similar associations, if organized in various localities throughout our Society; they would find within our borders a demand for the publications of Friends and for other useful books, to meet which, we are satisfied, would forward the best interests of our Religious Society in important respects. Experience has abundantly testified to the necessity of supplying the younger portion of our members with reading of an instructive and interesting character.

We would respectfully point out to Friends who may not have moved in this matter the increased efficiency gained by forming associations for these purposes; and would gladly

render to any such societies what aid may lie in our power, in supplying our own publications at the lowest prices, and in the selection of other books, which we think we can frequently enable them to buy at low rates.

The total number of volumes disposed of thus far, is 8833.

The wholesale price, at which nearly all the books have been sold, was so regulated as barely to return the cost of the paper, printing, and binding, without any charge for the use of the stereotype plates. The paper used is of superior quality, and the mechanical work executed at the first-class printing and binding establishments. Thus, volumes of attractive appearance and substantial finish are offered at prices much lower than they could be procured at through the channels of remunerative trade; and the opportunity, we trust, will be properly appreciated in the various sections of our country.

In order that the objects of the Association might be carried out with efficiency, it was early found necessary to procure a convenient and central location in our city, where a store might be opened and a room furnished suitable for the meetings of the Association and

its committees. This has been secured in the house No. 109 N. Tenth Street, which the Association has rented in connection with the "Contributors to Friends' Review" and the "Managers of Haverford College."

The intercourse we have had with Friends in various localities, has furnished us with information as to the description of books more particularly needed at the present time. Such as are adapted to the youthful mind and to the capacity of children, are especially wanted. It is stated that for juvenile books, Friends are almost entirely dependent on the publications of other religious associations, in which, as may reasonably be expected, there are often sentiments and expressions at variance with the testimonies of our own religious Society. This is a source of much concern, and it is probable that in some cases it has prevented the proper encouragement of a taste for reading. We feel that it would be very desirable to remedy this deficiency, and would call the attention of suitably qualified Friends to this interesting subject. The preparation of books of this description is a work which seems especially adapted to the female mind, for who but the mother can fully enter into

the imperfectly expressed thoughts and emotions of the infant? Who can so fully as the Christian woman sympathize with those early aspirations which are the promptings of a Heavenly Father's love? Were a series of little books, well adapted to the use of Friends' families, prepared, there would be found no difficulty in procuring their publication and wide diffusion.

The widely spread reverses which, within the past twelve months, have been severely felt in almost every section of our country, have diminished in many families the means that could be applied to the purchase of books. We were well aware of this, and consider the number of our publications disposed of, under these circumstances, as encouraging; but we are hoping that, with renewed prosperity, there will be a largely increased demand for them in future. We commend the subject to the serious consideration of our Friends, not only on their own account and that of their families, but as a means of spreading the truth in their respective neighborhoods, and of influencing for good many who now spend much of their precious time in reading books of indifferent or pernicious

character. If, in a central position, in a country district, or in a suitable store located in the thriving town, an assortment of these portable volumes were kept for sale, many might be induced to purchase and read them. In the business interview with a neighbor, an occasion might present for handing the little volume as a messenger of good. Much usefulness might, in this way, be within reach of individuals who are accustomed to think themselves excused from devoting their time to the benefit of others. Thus the pure principles of Christianity would be disseminated; and it may be that, under the Divine blessing, they would be permitted to take root in the hearts of some who had before known but little of the practical working of the truth.

Printed by order of the Association.

JAMES WHITALL,
Secretary.

PHILADELPHIA, 1st mo. 7th, 1859.

FUND FOR GRATUITOUS DISTRIBUTION.

ALTHOUGH, as stated in the preceding Report, the Association has a small capital, yet the whole of this being employed in the publication of books, which are sold at cost, we can only apply the receipts for sales to the printing of new editions to keep up our stock. The importance, therefore, of having a fund under the control of the Association, for the gratuitous distribution of books, has often been a subject of consideration. It is evident, from information received, that there is a large field of usefulness both in and out of our Religious Society, in the more distant parts of our country, which can only be effectively occupied through the aid of such a fund. A little timely encouragement offered to individuals, by sending gratuitously a small assortment, might induce them to engage in the work of circulating, among their neighbors, volumes containing good seed for hearts which had known but little before of the Christian life. We trust this subject will take hold of such Friends as may be inclined to

devote a portion of their estates for the moral and religious benefit of their fellow-men ; and that liberal contributions will be made towards the establishment of a permanent fund for this desirable purpose.

FORM OF A BEQUEST.

I give and bequeath unto "The Association of Friends for the Diffusion of Religious and Useful Knowledge," whose office is at No. 109 North Tenth Street, Philadelphia, the sum of _____, to be paid to the Treasurer for the time being; to be securely invested, and the income thereof devoted to the promotion of the objects of said Association.

A DEVISE OF REAL ESTATE.

I give and devise unto "The Association of Friends for the Diffusion of Religious and Useful Knowledge" (here describe the property or ground-rent), together with the appurtenances, in fee simple; the income from which is to be devoted to the promotion of the objects of said Association.

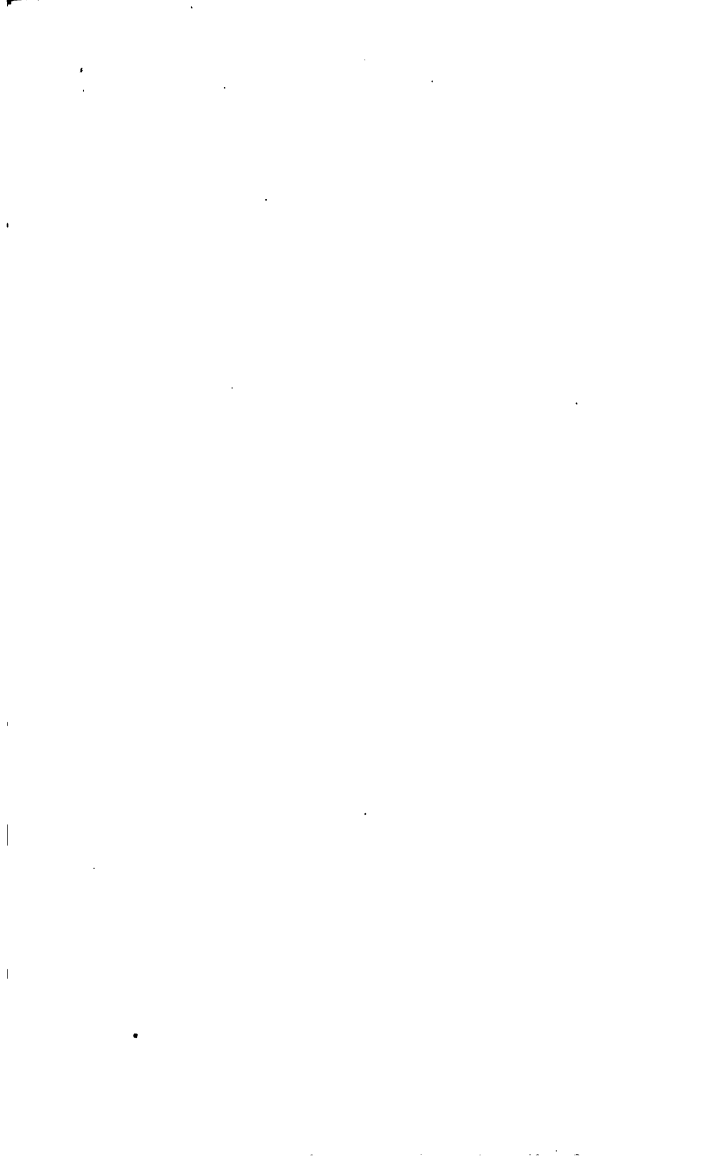
Books published by the "Association of Friends for the Diffusion of Religious and Useful Knowledge," and for sale at their office, No. 109 North Tenth Street, Philadelphia:—

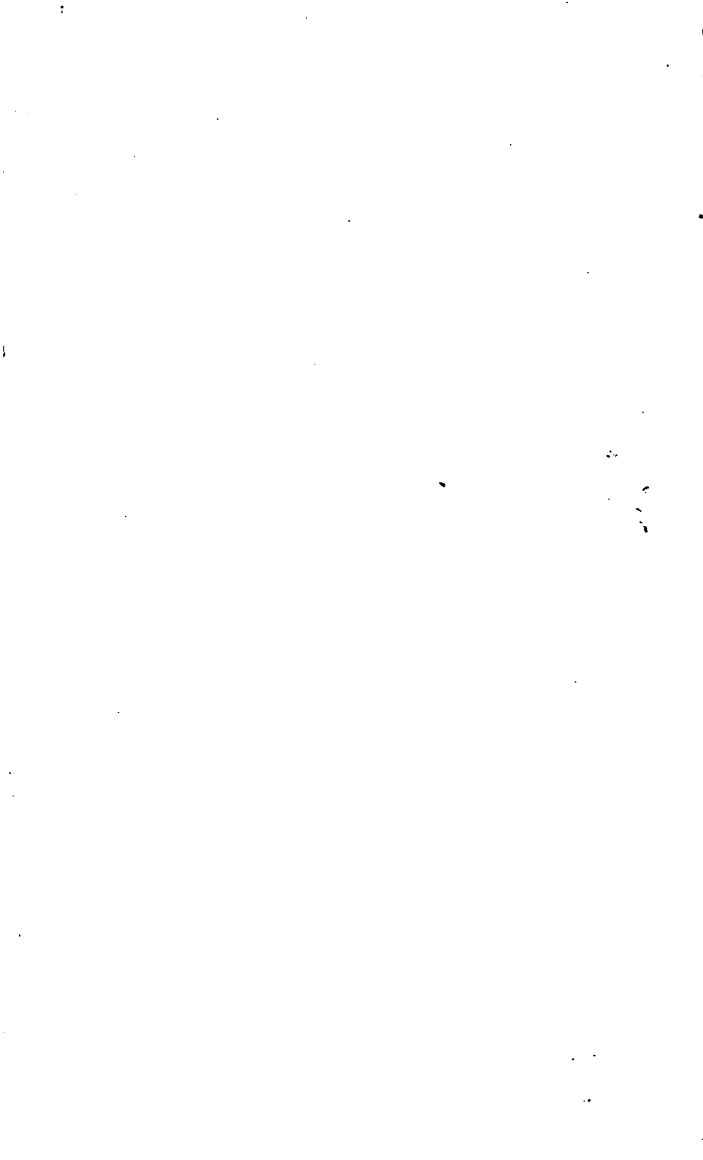
		If mailed
A Memoir of Elizabeth Fry,	14 cts.	19 cts.
A Selection from the Epistles of Geo. Fox, .	14 "	19 "
The Life of Margaret Fox, wife of Geo. Fox,	14 "	19 "
Views of American Slavery a Century Ago,	15 "	21 "
Youthful Pilgrims,	15 "	21 "
A Selection from the Letters of Isaac Pen- ington,	15 "	21 "
Rambles of a Naturalist, with Life of the Author, Dr. Godman,	15 "	21 "
A Memoir of William Penn,	17 "	24 "
A Memoir of Maria Fox,	17 "	23 "
A Memoir of Daniel Wheeler, and his Visit to the Pacific Isles,	20 "	28 "
Aunt Jane's Verses for Children, Illustrated,	20 "	26 "

The retail prices of our books having been reduced, the discount from those prices on orders of fifty copies or upwards, will be hereafter 20 per cent., or one-fifth, which makes the wholesale rate the same as heretofore; this being the lowest rate which will prevent actual loss on the publications.

Persons wishing to order any of the above works by mail, should inclose the price, including postage, in a letter addressed to

WM. MACNIVEN, Agt.,
Box 2149, Post Office,
Philadelphia, Pa.





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